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CURRENT TRENDS IN BOARD GAME DESIGN

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Abstract. The paper examines current trends in board game design, including the development of game mechanics, visual design, ergonomics, and the integration of digital technologies. The influence of inclusivity, thematic design, and social interaction on shaping the modern gaming experience is explored. Scientific works dedicated to board game design are analyzed, and the key directions of industry development are identified. It is established that contemporary board game design focuses not only on entertainment, but also on creating an emotional, educational, and communicative environment.

Keywords: board games, game design, game mechanics, ergonomics, inclusivity, digital technologies, game design, visual design.

Introduction. The modern board game industry demonstrates rapid growth and increasing popularity in Ukraine [3] and worldwide. Board games have long ceased to be merely a leisure activity, transforming into a distinct cultural and design phenomenon. The contemporary board game market encompasses thousands of projects across various genres: strategy, cooperative, role-playing, family, educational, and thematic games. One reason for the popularity of board games is their ability to create live social interaction and emotional experience. Unlike digital games, board games provide the physical presence of participants and direct communication between them. This is why board game design has become an important area of modern game design and a subject of academic research [9]. Current trends in board game development demonstrate the active introduction of new mechanics, improvements in visual style, the application of ergonomic solutions, and the integration of digital technologies into the traditional game format [11].

Purpose and objectives of the study. The aim of the study is to analyze current trends in board game design and identify the key aspects that influence the formation of the modern gaming experience. To achieve this goal, the following tasks are addressed: analyzing contemporary approaches to board game design; examining the influence of game mechanics on player interaction; defining the role of visual design and ergonomics; characterizing the impact of digital technologies on board games; identifying the main development trends in the contemporary board game market.

Research results and their discussion. The topic of board game design is actively studied within game studies and game design research. A significant number of academic works are devoted to the analysis of mechanics, user interaction, and the formation of gaming experiences. In their work, K. Salen and E. Zimmerman examine a game as a system of interacting rules, mechanics, and player behavior [7]. The authors emphasize that modern game design must take into account not only the structure of rules, but also the emotional perception of the gameplay.

D. Norman's research on interaction design demonstrates the importance of ergonomics and intuitiveness in the creation of any product, including board games [5]. The principles of User Experience (UX) design — which define fundamental rules and guidelines to help create products that are convenient, useful, understandable, and pleasant for the user — are today actively applied in board game design, placing user needs, emotions, and comfort at the center of attention.

The work ″A Data Driven Review of Board Game Design and Interactions of Their Mechanics" analyzes contemporary board game mechanics and their interrelationships. The authors demonstrate that combining mechanics creates a more dynamic and varied gameplay experience [8].

The cognitive and visual ergonomics of modern board games are examined in ″Don't Flip the Table Yet″ [6]. The work finds that component design, color systems, and information organization significantly affect player comfort and perception.

Another important research direction is the integration of digital technologies into board games. The work "Dislocated Boardgames: Design Potentials for Remote Tangible Play" [4] considers the combination of physical interaction and digital tools as a new stage in board game development.

Based on the research conducted, several contemporary board game design trends have been identified and are described below.

One of the primary trends in modern game design is the combination of game mechanics — incorporating multiple mechanics within a single game. Contemporary board games frequently include elements of resource management, area control, deck building, cooperative interaction, and hidden roles. This approach ensures gameplay variety and increases player engagement [8].

Modern board games are characterized by a high level of artistic design, visual aesthetics, and atmosphere. Significant attention is paid to: illustration detail, component stylization, thematic color palettes, miniature design, and typography. Visual style has become an important tool for creating atmosphere and emotional immersion, which is especially evident in thematic and narrative games [9].

Board game design today actively employs UX/UI design principles. Developers strive to make games as ergonomic, intuitive, and comfortable as possible. Key ergonomic solutions include: large and legible fonts, color coding, clear icons, component organizers, and optimized rulebooks. Research confirms that ergonomics directly affects the speed of learning and the overall comfort of players [6].

Inclusivity and accessibility are particularly relevant in the modern world. Contemporary board games are increasingly oriented toward broad audiences, and

developers take into account the needs of people of different ages and physical abilities. Key design solutions include: color adaptation for people with color blindness, use of large fonts and high-contrast colors, clear symbols, localization into multiple languages, and simplified rules for beginners. Inclusivity is becoming an important standard of modern design [1, 5].

One of the most prominent trends is the integration of digital technologies into board games. Mobile applications are used for: automatic score tracking, scenario generation, musical accompaniment, augmented reality, and remote player interaction. The hybrid format combines the advantages of physical play and the digital environment [4].

Modern board games are increasingly focused on team interaction. Cooperative mechanics foster the development of communication, strategic thinking, negotiation, and joint decision-making, making board games an important tool for socialization and teamwork [10].

Another important aspect of board game design is environmental sustainability. Modern manufacturers are increasingly using eco-friendly materials: recycled cardboard, wooden components, non-toxic inks, and minimized use of plastic. Sustainability is becoming an important competitive factor in the board game market [2].

Conclusions. The study establishes that contemporary board game design is characterized by a comprehensive approach to creating gaming experiences. The main trends are: combining mechanics, developing visual aesthetics, implementing ergonomic solutions, ensuring inclusivity, integrating digital technologies, and prioritizing sustainability. It is also determined that modern board games serve not only an entertainment function, but also contribute to the development of communication, critical thinking, and social interaction. Future prospects for the industry are associated with the further merging of physical and digital formats, as well as an increasing level of personalization in the gaming experience.

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CORPORATE IDENTITY AS A TOOL FOR FORMING A COHESIVE BRAND IMAGE

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Abstract. The research analyzes corporate identity as a tool for forming a cohesive and recognizable brand image. Based on the analysis of scientific sources, it is determined that corporate identity is a vital strategic tool for developing brand recognition and competitiveness. It is shown that brand perception is formed not only by the name or logo but also by a set of visual elements, including the color palette, typography, graphic elements, packaging, advertising materials, the website, and social media. It is found that corporate identity ensures the unity of all brand components and helps to create a comprehensive system of visual communication with the target audience. The consistent use of uniform stylistic solutions contributes to increased brand recognition and the formation of lasting associations among consumers. Additionally, the study also examines the role of the brand book as a key element in maintaining corporate identity, defining the rules for using the brand's visual elements and ensuring the preservation of stylistic integrity across various communication and advertising materials. Particular attention is paid to current trends in corporate identity